

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 33-43 have been examined. Claims 2, 33-41 and 43 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claim 42 contains allowable subject matter.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,674,599 to Rae et al. (“Rae”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 2, 34 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Rae. However, Applicant has amended claims 2 and 35 to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 42. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 2 and 35 are now allowable for at least analogous reasons as claim 42. Further, since claim 34 is dependent upon claim 2, Applicant submits such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,667,846 to Kano et al. (“Kano”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 2, 33, 36-41 and 43 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Kano.

A. Claim 2

Applicant has amended claim 2 to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 42. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 2 is now allowable for at least analogous reasons as claim 42.

B. Claim 33

Applicant submits that claim 33 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency upon claim 2.

C. Claim 36

Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 42 into claim 36. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 36 is now in condition for allowance.

D. Claims 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 43

Applicant submits that claims 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 43 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency upon claim 2 or claim 36.

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Application No. 09/851,991

III. Allowable Subject Matter

As stated above, the Examiner has indicated that claim 42 contains allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 42 into independent claims 2, 35 and 36, and has canceled claim 42, without prejudice or disclaimer.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

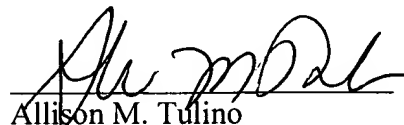
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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Allison M. Tulino
Registration No. 48,294